

war against her. Your Majesty implored my generosity, appealed to my feelings as a brother, and promised to alter your conduct. I thought this warning would be suilident. I raised my custom-house prohibitions, but your Majesty has returned to your old system. . . . Your Majesty received all the American ships that presented themselves in the ports of Holland after having been expelled from those of France. I have been obliged a second time to prohibit trade with Holland. In this state of things we may consider ourselves really at war. In my speech to the Legislative Body I manifested my displeasure; for I will not conceal from you that my intention is to unite Holland with France. This will be the most severe blow I can aim against England, and will deliver me from the perpetual insults which the plotters of your Cabinet are constantly directing against me. The mouths of the Rhine and of the Meuse ought, indeed, to belong to me. The principle that the *Thalweg* (towing-path) of the Rhine is the boundary of France is a fundamental principle. Your Majesty writes to me on the 17th that you are sure of being able to prevent all trade between Holland and England. I am of opinion that your Majesty promises more than you can fulfil. I shall, however, remove my custom-house prohibitions whenever the existing treaties may be executed. The following are my conditions: — First, The interdiction of all trade, and communication with England. Second, The supply of a fleet of fourteen sail of the line, seven frigates and seven brigs or corvettes, armed and manned. Third, An army of 25,000 men. Fourth, The suppression of the rank of marshals. Fifth, The abolition of all the privileges of nobility which are contrary to the constitution which I have given and guaranteed. Your Majesty may negotiate on these bases with the Duke. ('adore, through the medium of your Minister; but be assured that on the entrance of the first packet-boat into Holland I will restore my prohibitions, and that the first Dutch officer who may presume, to in-unit ni-t/jltty xhall he xaizadand hanyed at the mainyard. Your Majesty will find in me a brother if you prove yourself a Frenchman; but if you forget the sentiments which attach you to our common country you cannot think it extraordinary that I should lose sight of those which nature created between us. In short, the union of Holland and France will be, of all things, most useful to France, to Holland, and the whole Continent, because it will be most injurious to England. This union must be effected willingly or by force. Holland has given me sufficient reason to declare war against her. However, I shall not scruple to consent to an arrangement which will secure to me the limit of the Rhine, and by which Holland will pledge herself to fulfil the conditions stipulated above.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Much of the manner in which "Napoleon treated occupied countries such as Holland is explained by the spirit of his answer when Bougnot complained to him of the harm done to the Grand Duchy of Berg by the monopoly of tobacco. "It was extraordinary that you should not have discovered the motive that makes possible in the establishment of the monopoly of tobacco in the Grand Duchy. The question is not about your Grand Duchy